
REMARKS

This communication is a full and timely response to the Office Action dated June 15, 2004. By this communication, Applicant has canceled claim 21 and amended claims 17, 22, and 23. Claim 17 has been amended to include the subject matter previously recited in claim 21. Support for the subject matter recited in claim 17 can be found variously throughout the specification and claims, for example, in original claim 21. Claims 18-20 have been amended to address antecedent issues. Claims 22 and 23 have been amended so that they now depend from claim 17 and to address antecedent issues. No new matter has been added.

Claims 17-20, 22, and 23 are pending where claim 17 is independent.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that objected to claims 21-23 contain allowable subject matter. As discussed above, Applicant has canceled claim 21, amended claim 17 to incorporate the subject matter previously recited in claim 21, and amended claims 22 and 23 to depend from claim 17. Accordingly, claims 17-20, 22, and 23 are in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by *Shibano et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,154,434. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant has amended claim 17 to include the allowable subject matter previously recited in claim 21. Thus, claim 17 is now allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102 be withdrawn, and this claim be allowed.

Claims 18-20 depend from claim 17. By virtue of this dependency, Applicant submits that claims 18-20 are allowable for at least the same reasons given above with respect to claim 17. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102 be withdrawn, and these claims be allowed.

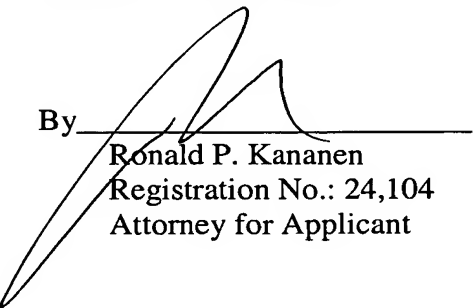
Conclusion

Based on at least the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 17-20, 22, and 23 are allowable, and this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant requests favorable reexamination and reconsideration of the application. In the event the Examiner has any comments or suggestions for placing the application in even better form, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. SON-2324/DIV2 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: August 25, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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